

WASHINGTON, D.C. – With American demand for a skilled technical workforce rising, Congressman Charlie Wilson (OH-6) today introduced the Rural Career and Technical Education Expansion Act, to encourage the retention of vocational teachers in rural areas.

“More and more students, especially in rural areas, are pursuing career and technical educations that focus on critical coursework like technology, business and marketing, healthcare, and other industrial trades,” Wilson said. “My legislation will ensure that these students are taught by the best and brightest vocational educators.”

Studies show that students in rural schools are highly likely to be involved in vocational courses.

“My hope is that more vocational teachers will choose to stay in rural schools if they are eligible for the benefits this legislation provides. If enacted, it would provide student loan forgiveness to teachers of integrated career and technical education courses at rural secondary schools,” Wilson said.

The bill states that any teacher who completes five school years teaching career and technical coursework on a full-time basis, including at least one integrated course at a rural secondary school, could receive up to \$17,500 to repay a student loan.

Rep. Wilson discussed this legislation last Friday at the Jefferson County Vocational School. He met with Tom Daley, a science instructor from Mingo Junction and Natalie Campana, a multimedia and design instructor of Steubenville, both of whom owe sizable student loans. Additionally, Superintendent Dale Edwards told Wilson that no fewer than 10 instructors at JCVS would qualify for the loan assistance as proposed in the bill.

“Last week we celebrated National Teacher Day,” Wilson said. “What better way to honor our vocational teachers than by helping them pay for their own education.”